

THE
CONTRIVERSY
CONCERNING
F R E E - W I L L,
AND
Predestination,

Set in a *true Light*, and brought to a
short Issue.

IN A
Letter to a Friend.

THE SECOND EDITION.

Recommended to Mr. WHITFIELD,
and his Followers.

L O N D O N :

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T H E
P R E F A C E.



HIS Little Book was Published first about 13 Years ago, and, by GOD's Blessing, it had the desired Effect for which it was written, which was, That several bethought themselves, and Impartially Examined the *Predestinarian Doctrine*, and as A Consequence of this, they came to Abhor the *Doctrine* as *Blasphemous*, although they had suck'd it in with their Mother's Milk, or had it taught them by those of the *Party* with whom they joined in *Communion*. The Occasion of Reprinting it now, with some Improvements, is this, The Author has been given to understand, That Mr. *Whitfield* has Adopted this *Doctrine* into his *Scheme*, and there are many well-meaning People who take it from him, as an *Oracle*, most *Implicitly* believing that he is *Inspired* by the HOLY
A 2 GHOST

iv The P R E F A C E.

GHOST, as he pretends to be with all that he teacheth them in his *Sermons* and in *Conversation*, which is the common Artifice of all such *New Guides*, and yet this *Doctrine* is the *Reverse* of what the SPIRIT of GOD has Revealed in *Holy Writ*.

WHILE he pretended only to endeavour to *Reform Morals*, to shew the Necessity of *Regeneration*, and such-like, his Boldness in delivering such useful Things, might have had no bad, but very good Effects upon those who followed him, and he might have been made Use of by Providence, to lead People from *Darkness* to *Light*, and from the *Power* of *Satan*, unto *GOD*; but when he became indifferently *Popular*, and joined himself to all Sorts of *Sects* amongst us, if they chimed in with him, many judicious and serious *Christians*, began to suspect him, as being a *TOOL*, though perhaps he may not have Penetration to perceive it; of some *PARTY* which has bad Views, and they were confirmed in this, by his Wild *Journals*, and by his Boldness in condemning to the *Fire* or *Water* the Works of some very eminent Men, for Piety and good Learning, such as the Works of that excellent Author of *The Whole Duty of Man*, &c. who was a very Good, Modest, Humble Christian, who had but Fifty Pounds a Year to live on, and would have no more, though offered Preferment by King *Charles* the Second.

BUT

The P R E F A C E. v

BUT now, that with undaunted Assurance he takes upon him to instill this abominable *Doctrin*e of *Predestination*, into his Implicit-Hearers and Admirers, which runs counter to *Revelation*, to the Blessed *Nature* of GOD, His *Love* and *Mercy*, which Depreciates the *Merits* and *Satisfaction* of *JESUS CHRIST*, in the Grand *Atonement*, whereby He reconciled GOD the FATHER to our *Nature*, in our *Nature*, which sets His *Attributes* out of *Harmony*, which makes *Praying* *useless*, and the Command to *Pray*, an *Imposition*, which makes GOD *Partial*, *Arbitrary*, *Despotick*, and *Unjust*, as well as *Cruel*, which makes the *Christian Priesthood*, and *Sacraments*, at Least *Insignificant*. Who can reasonably Doubt that there is a *Plot* of *Satan*, and his *Emissaries* at the Bottom, to promote *Infidelity*, &c. And all this perhaps to make Way for proper *Popery*, from their *Principle* of *Divide et Impera*. *Divide* and *Govern*.

THESE Considerations make the Author of this Letter now Reprint it, as a seasonable Warning to Mr. *Whitfield*, and his Admirers and Followers, to shew him, and them, that their Blind *Guide* Leads them out of the Way of Revealed *Truth*, and in Opposition to the *Doctrines* of the Reformed *Church* of *England*, into a Labyrinth of confuted *Heresies*.

THE

vi The P R E F A C E.

THE Author hopes, That neither Mr. *Whitfield*, nor his *Party*, will take this kindly meant *Warning* amiss of him. If they do, he will be sorry for it; but if Mr. *Whitfield* should happen to take it by a wrong Handle, and fall foul of it, in his Dogmatical, Dictatorial Way, he may, but must not expect any Answer in Print or Writing, for the Author is far from being fond of *Controversy*, and therefore he for Once will follow Mr. *Whitfield* in finishing this with his Assuming Air, DIXI.

A D V E R -



ADVERTISEMENT.

I RECOMMEND *A Little thin Book in Octavo, upon the Subject of Predestination, to Mr. Whitfield, which is Called, Fate and Destiny Inconsistent with Christianity; or, The Horrid Decree of Absolute and Unconditional Election and Reprobation, fully Detected, &c.* By EDWARD BIRD. London, 1726. *This Book is suited to the meanest Capacities, and yet has so much Strength of Reasoning, from plain Texts of Scripture, that it is very Convincing.*

IF Mr. Whitfield Answers this Book to my Satisfaction, I shall take it to be An Answer to me. But then I desire it may not be only the Dogmatical IPSE DIXIT of One full of himself, of a Heated Imagination, but made Good by solid Proofs from Plain, Unperverted Texts of Holy Scripture, as understood by the Agreeing Sentiments of the Primo-Primitive, Illuminated Fathers of the first
Three

viii ADVERTISEMENT.

Three Centuries, *before the Failure of the Charismata ; and in the Gospel Spirit of Meekness, without Wrangling : Otherwise I shall not Value it, but Look upon it as the Product of an Inflamed Zeal, (but not according to Knowledge) of One who is very Hot, very Self-sufficient, and Impatient of Contradiction.*

ERRATA.

- P. 2. l. 27. for *Lost*, read *Defaced*.
p. 5. l. 10. after *Repaired*, add *Image of GOD*.
p. 26. l. 23. r. *Vertue*.
ibid. l. 27. r. as we are.
p. 28. l. 11. r. *Jugling*.
-

THE



*The Controversy concerning Free-Will
and Predestination, set in a true
Light, and brought to a short Is-
sue.*

S I R,



N Obedience to your Commands, I
send you my own Sentiments con-
cerning this *Controversy*; and shall
not give you the Trouble of the va-
rious *Arguments* which have been
hotly managed without *Charity*, by those who *dis-*
pute about it, more like People who *Contend* for
Victory, than that are in *Quest* of *Truth*.

I THEREFORE put it entirely upon
this *Issue*; First, That GOD has most undoubt-
edly, and acknowledgedly, FREEDOM OF WILL.
Secondly, That *Man* was *Created* in the IMAGE of
GOD, and after His LIKENESS.

BUT If any one will be so wicked and foolish
as to deny, That *Freedom* of *Will* is an *Attribute*
of GOD, the great Prophet *Daniel* may be his
Instructor, iv. 35.—*He doth according to his WILL,*
in the Army of Heaven, and among the Inhabitants
of the Earth: And none can stay his Hand, or say
unto Him, What dost thou? See also *Job* ix, 1. to
13. And *Isa.* xiv. 5. to 14. And *Rom.* xii, 2.
Where St. Paul calls the WILL of GOD PER-

B

PECT

fect; which yet it cannot be, unless it be *FREE*. Nor indeed, can He be *GOD*, if He have not a *FREE-WILL*: For *Freedom of Will* is an *Essential Attribute of GOD*; Who, as such, must be *Independent*.

AND, That *Man* was Created in the *IMAGE* of *GOD*. and after His *LIKENESS*, appears from *Gen. i. 26*. And *GOD* said, let Us make *Man* in Our *IMAGE*, after Our *LIKENESS*: 27. So *GOD* Created *Man* in His own *IMAGE*; in the *IMAGE* of *GOD* Created He him; *Male* and *Female* Created He them.

FROM These Premises, thus established, in *Divine Authority*, it follows plainly, directly, and necessarily, That *Adam* was endued with *Freedom of Will*, at his *Creation*, otherwise he could not be created in the *IMAGE* of *GOD*, and after His *LIKENESS*: For one *Essential Attribute* of *GOD*, and consequently of His *IMAGE*, is *Freedom of Will*. And to enforce this, read *Deut. xiii. 15, 19*. which *Justin Martyr* in his *Apology* applies to *Adam* before his *Fall*, in the first Instance. See *Dr. Grabe's* Notes upon it. This Father flourished *Anno Dom. 140*, and in his *Apology* has proved *Free Will* in *Man*, effectually from *Holy Writ*, and by just and strong Reasoning.

BUT *Adam* forfeited and lost this *IMAGE* of *GOD*, by his *Sin* and *Fall*: And thereby also forfeited and lost this *Freedom of Will*, which must be an *Essential Attribute* of that *IMAGE*; else the *IMAGE* must be *Imperfect*; insomuch that he could then will nothing that was *Good*; until the *Divine IMAGE* was *Repaired* or *Awakened* in him, which it was presently after his *Fall*, by the *Promise* then made of the *MESSIAH*, who was to bruise the Head of the *Serpent*, *Gen. iii. 15*. compared with *St. John i. 9*. where it is said, that

JESUS

(JESUS CHRIST, the LOGOS, or WORD) *was the true LIGHT, which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World.*

THIS Repared IMAGE of GOD, is a Spark of His own Omnipotent LIGHT, the *heavenly Ens*, which GOD is pleased in *Love and Mercy* to afford *Man*, as an *Earnest* of the stupendiously miraculous *Restoration* of him, which He has been pleased to take upon Himself; and for the bringing of which to bear, in due Time, He has pledged His *Faith*. It is the whole *Kingdom* of GOD in *Miniature*; as a *Grain of Mustard-Seed*, which takes *Root downward*, and bears *Fruit upward*; according as *Man Opens* himself, like good *Ground*, to receive the *Divine Influences*, to the *Banishing* of the *Darkness*, and the *Increase* of the *Divine LIGHT*, by the *Process* of *Regeneration*; untill the whole *Extent* of the *Soul* be filled therewith, that is, with GOD Himself; for it is no less, for all which see these Texts following, St. *Matth.* xiii. 31. *Acts* iii. 19, 20, 21. St. *John* i. 4, 5, 7. *Eph.* v. 8, 14. *Col.* i. 12, and iii. 18, and iv. 6. 1 *Cor.* xv. 49. *Eph.* iv. 13. And that we must have GOD the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST in us, see *Eph.* ii. 22. and iv. 6, 13. St. *Matth.* x. 20. St. *John* xiv. 20. *Rom.* viii. 10. 2. *Tim.* i. 14. and many more.

SINCE Then, JESUS CHRIST *lighteth every Man* (without Exception) *that cometh into the World*, by His *Divine LIGHT*, in one Degree or other. This *Divine LIGHT* is the *Awakened IMAGE* of GOD in the *Soul* of *Man*; which must *Grow and Vegetate* by the *Laws and Rules* of *Spiritual Vegetation*, in the *Process* of *Regeneration*, by which, at last, our *Will* becomes fully *Resolved* and *Transmuted* into the *WILL* of GOD; When we *come in* (or into) the *Unity of the Faith*, and of

the Knowledge of the SON of GOD, unto a PERFECT MAN, unto the Measure of the Stature of the Fulness of CHRIST. Eph. iv. 13. Till then, we must fight manfully under CHRIST's Banner, and must undergo the Casualties of our Spiritual Warfare, by Temptations, Trials, &c. before we become Victorious; which yet we shall in the End be, if we hold the Beginning of our Confidence stedfast unto the End. Heb. iii. 14. If we endure to the End. St. Matt. x. 22. If we are not deficient to ourselves. Ezek. xviii. 31. If we make the right Use of our Freedom of Will, even that for which it has been bestowed upon us, by Resigning it daily more and more to GOD, as JESUS CHRIST did. This Freedom of Will then, being an Essential Attribute of GOD, and consequently of His IMAGE; it is therefore certainly and necessarily Awakened in us, therewith and thereby.

THIS being thus firmly established and proved, from the Immutable Nature of GOD, and the Perfection of His IMAGE, as revealed to us in Holy Writ; and that it is impossible the Holy Scriptures can, or do, contradict themselves: Therefore, when we meet with any Text or Passage, in them, one or more, which at first Sight, seem to interfere with this established Divine Truth, we should compare Text with Text, Scripture with Scripture; which, when opened in us by the HOLY SPIRIT of GOD, Who dictated them, is by much the best Interpreter of Scripture; until we fairly Reconcile such Texts and Passages with this certain and established Divine Truth, and which is not so difficult to do, as some have imagined; and not presently, or hastily conclude, as too many do, that the Holy Scripture doth, or can, Contradict itself; which is to Impeach the
HOLY

HOLY GHOST of *Contradictions* ; or, that an established *Divine Truth* is given up in one Place of that *Divine Book*, which is *affirmed* and *fixed* in another. This were to make the *Divine Oracles* only as a *Nose of Wax*, a *Heap of Contradictions*, a *Bone of Contention*, unworthy of GOD ; by *wresting* them, as St. Peter tells us, 2 *Epist.* iii. 16. the *unlearned* and *unstable* do, but unto their own *Destruction*.

I TAKE this *Awakened* and *Repared Freedom of Will*, with *Power* to make the *Right Use* of it, to be what the *Schools* call, the *Gratia gratis data*, the *Grace of GOD* freely given ; by which, as *Free Agents*, we are again made capable of *Choosing* whether we will *Obe*y the *Voice* of GOD, which is the original *Evangelical Covenant*, *Exod.* xix. 5, 6. and *keep* His *Commandments*, which are not *grievous*, are not *insnaring*, and which is not *impossible* to be done, in an acceptable Degree, and so be *saved* ; or, by *Disobedience*, by *wilful Rebellion*, to incur *Damnation*. For it is according to our *Choice*, founded in the *Freedom of Will*, thus *Restored* to us, that we become *rewardable* or *punishable* hereafter.

NEXT, AS TO PREDESTINATION, if we duely and rightly consider the *Nature* of GOD, according to His *Revelation* of Himself, as necessarily the *same* from all *Eternity*, now, and to all *Eternity*, we shall find, that there can be no such Thing, properly, as *first* or *second* in Him ; and consequently, there can be no proper *Predestination*. But, if the Word *Predestination*, be a Word *ad captum*, as, in one Sense, it certainly is, and can be no other strictly, just as GOD is said to have *Eyes* and *Ears*, &c. [as the visible *Logos*, and] in Compliance with our poor, weak, finite Understanding, and to give us an easier and better Conception of his *Omniscience* and

and other *Attributes*. If *Predestination* be understood in this Sense, then, I do affirm it, that GOD has *Predestinated all Mankind* to be *saved*; For He *WILLETH NOT* the *Death, Destruction, or Damnation of any, but that ALL* should come to *Repentance*, 2 St. Pet. iii. 9. Just so in St. Matth. xviii. 14. Where CHRIST is speaking of *Children, or little Ones*, and shewing us that we must be like them, no doubt in an absolute *Compliance* with the *Will of their Parents*, that is, in *Resignation*, if we mean to be *saved*: He adds, *even so it is not the Will of your Father which is in Heaven, that one of these little Ones should perish*. Which shews that they may *perish*, but that it is not the *WILL of GOD* that they should; far less must any of them *necessarily perish*, by the *Decree of GOD*. Therefore it is inconsistent with his most gracious *Declarations of His Love and Mercy in CHRIST*, to believe or say, that he *WILLED* the *Damnation of any*, more especially, by an *Irresistible Irrevocable Decree* from all *Eternity*.

AND He has likewise declared in Ezek. xviii. 32. That *He has no Pleasure in the Death of him that dieth*. Now, if He had made the *Decree of Reprobation*, which the *Predestinarians* alledge, He must then certainly have a *Pleasure* in the *fulfilling of His own Decree*; which since He has expressly declared *against*, He therefore certainly never made any such *Decree*.

BESIDES, St. Paul saith, 1 Tim. ii. 4. That GOD *WILL have ALL MEN to be saved, and to come unto the Knowledge of the Truth*. Now, from the blessed *Nature of GOD*, Who is *LOVE*, it is absolutely impossible, that He can *WILL All Men, or Any Man*, to come to the *Knowledge of the Truth*, only, and on purpose, to

Damn

Damn them the more effectually, according to the *Predestinarian Decree of Reprobation*. But the first Part of this *Text*, *GOD WILL have ALL MEN to be saved*, effectually clears *GOD*; and justifies Him from this Imputation of *Severity*, with which they accuse Him. For, in order to the *Salvation of all Men*, which He *WILLETH*, He also *WILLETH ALL MEN to come to the Knowledge of the Truth*, which is *JESUS CHRIST*, *St. John xiv. 6. JESUS saith unto him, (Thomas) I am the WAY, the TRUTH, and the LIFE.*

IF GOD had Predestinated any to Damnation, His *WILL* must *Accord* with, and be *Agreeable* to, His *Decree*. Since then, He *WILLETH NOT the Damnation of any*; neither has He *Predestinated any to Damnation*. For He *WILLETH ALL MEN to be saved*; but still, as *St. Paul* informs us, *1 Cor. xv. 23. Every Man in his own Order*, Some sooner, some later, but all sooner or later.

THEREFORE, None are to be *Condemned or Damned*, because of an *Irresistable Irrevocable Decree*, *Enacted from all Eternity*; but because, that being now again made *Free Agents*, by having our *Lost Freedom of Will Restored* to us, and in us, by the *Repairing the IMAGE of GOD* in our *Souls*, in an useful Degree; we *Chuse Darknes* rather than *Light*, because we *Do not* those Things which we are not only *Required*, but also *Enabled* to do, by the *Repairing the IMAGE of GOD* in our *Souls*.

AND Thus our blessed *LORD* Himself has determined this Matter, *St. John iii. 19. Saying, And this is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men loved Darknes rather than Light, because their Deeds were evil. They who*

who Love Darkneſs, do certainly Prefer it to Light. This Preference is a Choice, and they accordingly Chuse it, becauſe they Love and Prefer it. And this Choice is an Act of the Will, which being wrong and wickedly applyed; for this Miſapplication it is, that they who are guilty of it Incurr Damnation. This Juſtifies GOD, and his Juſt and Merciful Œconomy towards fallen Man, as it is our bounden Duty to do; and it ſhews, that it muſt be our own Fault, if we are damned, Let God be true, and every Man a Liar, as it is written (Pſalm li. 4.) That Thou mighteſt be juſtified in Thy Saying, and mighteſt Overcome when Thou art judged, Rom. iii. 4. O LORD, Righteouſneſs belongeth unto Thee, but unto us Confuſion of Faces. Dan. ix. 7.

I THINK, What I have ſaid is ſufficient to Eſtabliſh the Doctrin of Free-Will; and to Overthrow that of Predeſtination. Yet for the Sake of thoſe who are not Miſled by Intereſt, who are not Malicious Predeſtinarians, I ſhall add a few more improveable Hints to corroborate the true Scripture Doctrin of Free Will, againſt the Damning Predeſtinarian Doctrin; to juſtify the Love and Mercy of GOD in CHRIST.

FOR This End, if we duely conſider the indiſpenſibly neceſſary Duty of RESIGNATION, which is a capital Article of Practical Chriſtianity; we ſhall find, that this great Duty is abſolutely Impracticable, if we are not endued with Freedom of Will. And therefore, it is barbarous and ſtupid Blaſphemy to imagine, that the Juſt GOD of Love and Mercy, can Require Reſignation from us, unleſs He had firſt endued us with Freedom of Will. For we cannot, in any tollerable Propriety, be ſaid to Reſign, what is not our Right, or what is not in our Poſſeſſion, or Power to Reſign.

Far

Far less is it decent to believe, that GOD would *Require* us, upon the *Peril* of *Damnation*, to *Resign* what he has put entirely out of our *Power* to *do*. For *Resignation* of our *Will* to GOD, supposeth, and indeed shews clearly, that GOD has endued us with a *Will* and with *Power* to *Resign* it, or *Not*, as we please, yet at our *Peril*. And without *Resignation* of our *Will* to GOD, in some acceptable *Degree*, we cannot properly be called *true Christians*. That which appears to be the great Reason why GOD has most graciously been pleased to Endue us with this *Freedom of Will*, is, That as *Rational Creatures*, as *Free Agents*, we may *voluntarily*, *freely*, and by *Choice*, *Resign* this *Freedom of Will* to Him, and to Him alone, who endued us with it, as our own proper *Fact*, and *Deed*; that so, our *Resignation* of it may become *Rewardable*; as the not *Resigning* it is *Punishable*. Thy *WILL* be done in *Earth*, as it is in *Heaven*. It is therefore both *Folly* and *Sin*, not to *Resign* our *Will* to GOD; and it is also both *Folly* and *Sin* to *Resign* it to any other.

IF Any *Novice* in *Christianity* shall ask, how comes *Resignation* to be so great and necessary a *Duty*? Let such consider the great *Resignation* of our Blessed LORD, our great *Exemplar*, recorded in the *Gospels*; Let them consider the *Nature* of the *Thing*, the *Terms* of the *Covenant*, the *Necessity* of *Obedience* to the *Voice* and *Commands* of GOD, the *Depravity* of our *Will* by Nature; with the *Infinite* and *Absolute Perfection* of the *WILL* of GOD; What these lead them into, and what the *Holy Scripture* contains concerning them; and let them read such *Practical Books*, as the admirable *Thomas à Kempis* in his own primitive simple *Stile*, and the fa-

mous *Dr. Worthington* upon this Subject, and then I doubt not but they will be fully satisfied of the *Conveniency*, and *absolute Necessity*, of *Resignation*.

BUT Farther, we owe the *Reparing* the IMAGE of GOD in our *Souls*, to the *Love* and *Mercy* of GOD, in and through JESUS CHRIST, and to the *Purchase*, *Merits* and *Satisfaction* of CHRIST; Therefore it is highly *Derogatory* to the *Divine Love* and *Mercy*; to the *Purchase*, *Merits* and *Satisfaction* of CHRIST; and very *undutiful* and *ungrateful* also, to *deny* that we are *Endued* with *Freedom of Will*. For, by denying that we are *Free Agents*, we affirm, that either GOD has not *Awakened* and *Restored* his own IMAGE in us, or if He has, that it is only an *imperfect*, *deficient*, or *defective* IMAGE of Himself, which He has *Restored* to us. And the IMAGE of GOD must be *Perfect*, because He is *Perfect*; for He could not be GOD were there any *Imperfection* in Him, or were He *capable* of any, and therefore His IMAGE must be *Perfect* also. And yet thus *Imperfect* it must be, if in the *Repared Divine IMAGE* however small, there are not *all* the *Attributes* of GOD, though but in *Miniature*. The smallest *Spark* of *Light*, which flows from our *Cæstrial Sun*, is as truly *Light*, in its due *Proportion*, as is the whole *Body* of the *Sun*. GOD is *Light*, and therefore his IMAGE must be *Light* also. And our *Repared Divine Light* is the *Eternal Word* of GOD, which constitutes the supreme *Beatitude* in GOD Himself. And this our *Divine Light* is now *Planted* in the *Center* or *Heart* of our *Soul*, as the IMAGE of its *Inexhaustible Original*, from which it *flows*. The Learned have observed a *Type* of this in *outward Nature*, in the *Bononian Stone*, which attracts to itself, and retains in itself, the *Rays* of the *Sun*, that if you put it in a dark Place, after

after it is thus impregnated with these *Rays*, it will *shine* clearly, and send forth Plenty of *Light*. But be this as it will.

I HAVE Already proved, that *Freedom of Will* is an *Essential Attribute* of GOD; and by the same *Rule* and *Reasoning* that the *Predestinarians* deprive us of this *Attribute*, we may also be deprived of all the rest of GOD's *Attributes*. And this brings what is acknowledged, in Words, to be the *IMAGE* of GOD, to be indeed no *IMAGE* of Him at all, as being devoid of all these *Divine Attributes*, which are *Essential* to GOD and it, and which is so far from making us become *Partakers of the Divine Nature*, according to 2 St. Peter i. 4. that it *Reduces* us to rather a worse *Condition*, than what *Adam* was in, by his *Sin* and *Fall* before the *Divine IMAGE* was *Repared* in him; and this, after all the Pains that JESUS CHRIST has been at for our *Salvation*. This is *Levelling* and *Depressing* of us down to what is near of Kin to that of *Bruit Beasts*, and putting us in a worse *Condition* than they are in.

THEREFORE, This *Predestinarian Doctrine*, in itself, is a manifest *Contradiction* to the Blessed *NATURE* of GOD, who is *LOVE* and *MERCY*. It gives the *Lie* to what GOD has most graciously been pleased to declare in *Holy Writ*. It *debars* a Soul from the *Original Improveable Perfection* of its *Nature*, in the *Design* of GOD; it makes GOD not *Able*, or, not *Willing* to extend His *Love* and *Mercy*, over *All His Works*, contrary to both His *Nature*, His *Declaration*, and His *Promise*. It *Belies* the *Nature* of CHRIST, as *Man*, who Himself said, St. John x. 18. That He had *Power* to lay down his *Life*, and *Power* to take it again. Which evidently shews, that He was endued with *Freedom of Will*, that He was a
Free

Free Agent, even as *Man*. And most certainly He made the right Use of it ; for He *Resigned His Will* to the *FATHER*, in the most momentuous Case that could possibly befall Him. As appears from St. *Math.* xxvi. 39, 42. which yet He could not do, if He had not a *Free Will*. And yet He was in all Things made like unto His Brethren, the Children of *Adam*, and the Seed of *Abraham*, Sin only excepted. *Heb.* ii. 17. Which is a full Proof of our being so *Endued*; and that we ought so to *Resign our Will to GOD*, as He our great *Exemplar* Was, and Did.

AND also to deny that we are thus endued, is is unduly and unlawfully to *contract* and *curtail* the true *Extent* of *CHRIST's Purchase, Merits,* and *Satisfaction* by the Grand *Attonement*, which is by this Means, greatly *depreciated*, and that most *unjustly* and *ungratefully*. It makes him as *MESSIAH*, as the *Mediator* between *GOD* and *Man*, either *not able*, or *not willing to do*, what He has *undertaken* to do, did, and for which He *Died*.

AND Therefore, all these Things, these necessary *Consequences* of this *Opinion*, being duly considered, and impartially weighed, are sufficient to make all true *Christians* Abhor and Renounce this terrible *Doctrine*. And still the rather, because St. *Paul*, who is erroneously looked upon by the *Predestinarians* as the great *Patron* of their *Doctrine*, has plainly *determined* against them. 1 *Cor.* vii. 37. Where he asserts, that a *Man* has *POWER* over his own *WILL*, which it is impossible he can have, in any Instance, unless he be endued with *Freedom of Will*, and be a *Free Agent*.

BUT Farther, Let any impartial unprejudiced Person consider, what is certainly true in *Fact*,
however

however little it be generally minded, that the *Doctrine of Predestination*, dresses up the Great and Almighty GOD of Love and Mercy, so to speak, in the *Cloathes of the Devil*, by making Him, contrary to his *NATURE*, most *Cruel*, *Tyrannical*, and *Despotick*. Thus *Robbing* Him, as far as they are able, (though I hope unwarily) of His *Essential Attributes* of *JUSTICE*, *MERCY* and *LOVE*.

FIRST, They Rob Him of His *JUSTICE*, by making Him decree Irrevocably, and Irreversibly, from all *Eternity*, to Damn the far greater Part of *Mankind*, for whom *CHRIST* died; for not doing what Himself has *Preordained* they shall never have in their *Power to do*, shall never be capable of *doing*, nor *do*.

SECONDLY, They Rob Him of His tender *MERCY*, which he has solemnly declared is over all his Works. *Psal. cxlv. 9.* And which is *Everlasting*, *Pf. c. 5.* And in which He *delights*, *Micah vii. 18.* And which *St. James* tells us *ii. 13. Rejoyceth against Judgment.* Yet nevertheless they Rob Him of this beloved *Attribute*, not only by *Confining* His *Mercy* to a very few, even in the *Design of GOD*, which makes it *Partial*, and not as it truly is, *Infinite*, according to His own Blessed *NATURE*, and His most solemn repeated *Declarations*; But also they make Him the very *Reverse* of *Mercy*, even *Cruel*, *Tyrannical*, and *Despotick*, by their *Reprobating Irreversible Decree*; each of which *Character* is *Diametrically Opposite* to His *Infinite JUSTICE, MERCY, and LOVE.*

AND Thirdly, They Rob Him of His *LOVE*; by making Him *Hate, Abhor, and Abominate* an infinite Number of poor *Mortals*, from all *Eternity*, before they *Existed* in the *World*; and then they
make

make Him *Irrevocably Predetermined*, *Sempeternally* to *Damn* them ; without ever putting it in their *Power* possibly to *Avoid* this *Damnation*. And, as if He delighted in *Cruelty*, and *Arbitrary Oppression*, to *Tantalize* these miserable *Pre-condemned Wretches*, with *Promises* of *Salvation*, provided they *Will* do, what by an *Irrevocable, Irresistable Decree*, He has *fore-ordained* shall never be in their *Power* to do.

TO *Force* the *Will* of *Man* is also *Inconsistent* with *GOD's Justice, Love, and Mercy*. His *JUSTICE* in *Revoking* a *Free Donation* given by *GOD* Himself to *Man*, *Irrevocably*.

HIS *LOVE*, whereby He *Enables* us to do, All that He *Requires* of us, and *Commands* us to do.

HIS *MERCY*, in sending His *SON* to *Redeem* us, if we will *Obey His Voice*.

AND What is all this then, but wickedly to assign the *Black Characters* and *Qualities* of a *Devil*, as *Attributes* to the infinitely *Just* and *Merciful GOD* of *Love*. Thus *Robbing* Him, as far as they may, of *several*, if not of *All*, His *Essential, Genuine, Divine Attributes* ; and representing Him as a *Cruel, Tyrannical, Despotick, Unmerciful Being*, without *Love*, without *Compassion*, but to a very few, to whom He is *Partial*. What a *monstrous, blasphemous Idea* this gives of *GOD* ; and how *inconsistent* with *Christianity*, and with *Truth*, any *Impartial Person* may see with half an *Eye* ! Nay, the wiser *Heathens* had a much *truer* and more *just* *Notion* of Him.

YET a great many *Predestinarians* there are even *Protestants*, who thus believe and teach, such as *Calvin*, on *Gen. III.* (and in several other *Parts* of his *Works*) there he saith. " That *GOD*
" would

“ would have *Man to Fall*: That *Man* is *Blinded*
 “ by the *Will* and *Command* of *GOD*.”

AND his Friend and Disciple *Bexa*, saith in his
Book of Predestination, That “ *GOD* hath *Pre-*
 “ *destinated*, not only to *Damnation*, but also to the
 “ *Causes* of it, whomsoever He thought fit.”

AND *Zanchius* saith in his *de Excœratione*,
 That, “ It is certain, That *GOD* is the *first*
 “ *Cause* of *Obduration*, and that *Reprobates* are
 “ held so fast under *GOD*’s Almighty *Decree*,
 “ that they cannot *Avoid Sinning*, and *Perishing*.”
 It were easy to add more who have published such
 horrid *Blasphemy*.

PISCATOR particularly speaks it very plain-
 ly, for he saith, That, “ *Reprobate People* are
 “ *Absolutely Ordained* to this Two-fold End, To
 “ undergo *Everlasting Punishment*, and necessarily
 “ to *Sin*, that they may be *justly punished*.”

THERE are very few *Dissenters*, few *Presby-*
terians, *Independents*, *Anabaptists*, &c. but who
 hold this Abominable, Blasphemous Doctrine:
 And I heartily wish that several of the *Church* of
England Clergy could sufficiently clear themselves
 of it. The *Accusing* of *GOD* in this horrid
 Manner has plainly Led the Way, and opened
 the Door to *Pelagian Socinianism*, *Arianism*, and to
Infidelity which Reigns amongst us, and indeed
 over all Nominal *Christendom* at this Day.

NOTHING, whether *Good* or *Evil*, can
 possibly be hid from *GOD*’s *All-seeing Eye*, with-
 al possible *Events*, as well as such which do *Actually*
come to pass. *GOD* sees All that is, what we
 call *Past*, *Present*, and to *Come*. *Uno Intuitu*, In
one View, at Once, and All that *Could*, *Can*, *Might*,
 or *May Come to pass*, but without *Determining* in
 Innumerable *Cases*. And therefore it must be the
Creature that *produceth Evil* by *Willing* it. And
 therefore

therefore also, If GOD would *forcibly* Interpose to hinder the *Evil* which the *Creature Willeth*, And He foresees, from *Coming to pass*, He would Act Contrary to his *Declarations, Donation, &c.* It therefore follows, that the *Creature* is to blame for the Production of Evil. This Vindicates GOD, His *Harmonious Attributes*, and his *Æconomy*. It justly Lays the *Blame* upon *Ourselves*, if we are Unhappy in the other World, and Excites us to do what is Commanded us, to avoid *Damnation*.

THEREFORE, It highly imports the *Predestinarians* most seriously to consider whither this *Doctrine leads them*; And whether they are not thereby led, indeed, to *deny the true GOD*, Since although they confess Him in, and by *Words*, yet by *denying His Essential Attributes*, and by *Representing Him* the very *Reverse* of what He truly is, and has declared Himself to be, they do in very Deed *deny Him*. And by *Applying* to Him such *wicked Qualities*, as properly belong to a *Devil*; Whether their GOD whom they *worship* be indeed the *true GOD*, or an *Imaginary GOD*, of their own *Forming*, Which is direct *Idolatry*, and which the true GOD abhors.

ALL *Principles* and *Expressions* which seem to *Limite*, or *Confine* GOD's *Omniscience*, or any of His *Attributes*, which are all in *Divine Harmony*, or which *Interfere*, or run *Counter* to one another, ought to be most carefully *Avoided*; For GOD is *Infinite* in Himself, and in All His *Attributes*.

NOR Will it be easy for them to Reconcile CHRIST's *Dying* for *All Men*. 2 Cor. v. 14. 15. compared with 2 *Tim.* ii. 6. *Who gave Himself a Ransom for ALL, to be testified in due Time*, And with vi. 10. GOD — is the *Saviour of ALL MEN*, especially of those that believe.
And

And with *Heb. ii. 9.* Where *St. Paul* saith, That *CHRIST* tasted Death for *EVERY MAN*. And with *1 Cor. xv. 22.* For as in Adam *ALL* Die; even so in *CHRIST* shall *ALL* be made Alive. It will not be easy, I say, for the *Predestinarians* to Reconcile these *Texts*, and many more, with their Decree of *Reprobation*, and *sempiternal Damnation*, Irrevocably Fixed from All Eternity. Nor particularly with *Ezek. xviii. 31, 33.* CAST AWAY from you all your Transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed, and MAKE YOU A NEW HEART; AND A NEW SPIRIT; For WHY WILL YE DIE; O House of Israel? 32. For I HAVE NO PLEASURE in the DEATH of Him that Dieth, saith the LORD GOD: Wherefore TURN your selves, and Live ye: Nor with *2 Tim. ii. 20, 21, 26.* Where *St. Paul*, speaks of A Man's PURGING HIMSELF, — and RECOVERING HIMSELF out of the Snare of the Devil. These *Texts* do not look like Decreeing Damnation to the far greater Part of Mankind; from All Eternity, Irrevocably, without putting it in their Power to be Saved: No, But rather Like *Expostulating* in Great Mercy and Love with *Free Agents*, that they may not Undo themselves by a wrong Application of their *Free Will*. Since GOD has put it in their Power, to cast away all their Transgressions: To prevent Dying, (the Second Death, which is Damnation:) To Turn; To Purge; and Recover themselves, &c. This being most Agreeable to His Blessed NATURE; to His WILL, to His MERCY, to His LOVE; And most Acceptable to Him. None of which it can be, if the *Predestinarian Doctrine* be true, or, If Man is not now again a *Free Agent*.

D

BUT

BUT Farther, *Man* must have *FREEDOM* of *WILL* because of the *Divine Nature* of the *Soul*, which is the *NESHAMAH*, A *Ray* of the *Divine Light*, the *Principle* of *Immortality*, or the *Immortalizing Principle*, by which the *Nephesh*, which is common to us and *Brutes*, is *Illuminated*; else *Praying* to *GOD*, would not only be *Needless* and *Useless*, but the very *Command* to *Pray*, An *Imposition*, A *Tantalizing* of us, Unworthy of *GOD*, and therefore in its *Nature* *Blasphemy*, though I hope not so meant by All that hold this abominable *Doctrine* of *Predestination* in the *Calvinian* and *Popish* Sense.

IT Is A Terrible Thing to *Rob* *GOD* of His *Essential Divine Attributes*, by the *Sophistical Nicety* of *School Distinctions*. And it is neither *Just* nor *Civil*, to *GOD* nor *Man*, to make *Infinite Numbers* of our *Fellow-Creatures*, to be the *Objects* of *GOD's Wrath*, from All *Eternity*, by an *Irrevocable, Irresistable Decree*; And to *Damn* them *Sempeternally* without a *Possibility* of *Escaping*: The *Incarnation*, *Death*, *Purchase*, *Merits*, *Satisfaction* and *Intercession* of *JESUS CHRIST* Notwithstanding. Indeed he has but *Little Reason* to expect to be *saved* by the *Merits* of *CHRIST*, who by *Principle* thus *Depreciates* Them.

IT were easy to *Enforce* what I have here *Advanced* with many more *Arguments*, but All I design is to *Hint* at Things; To bring the *Controversy* into a small and narrow *Compass*, and to leave the farther *Prosecution* to the *Cooler Thoughts* of the *Predestinarians* themselves, who are led into that *Doctrine* by *Education*, or for *Want* of due *Enquiry*, who are *well Disposed*; and hold it *bona Fide*, with an honest, though mistaken *Sincerity*, which I am well satisfied
many

many Do. And although the *Doctrine* itself be most Abominable, yet I hope, and Pray GOD, that He may sanctify even their *Error* unto them, and make *Merciful Allowances* for their *Unvoluntary Mistake*, who have sucked it in with their Mother's Milk, and have not had *Opportunity*, *Perspicuity* of *Judgment*, or *Resolution* enough to throw it off afterward, I take their Case to be this; That GOD's *Attributes* of OMNISCIENCE and OMNIPOTENCY, with a wrong Notion of his PRESCIENCE, have at first struck them so strongly, that it is not easy for them afterward to Conceive aright of the *Divine Temperature* and *Harmony* of these, and GOD's other *Essential Attributes*, Especially when his LOVE and MERCY seem to claim An *Abatement* of that *Infinite, Independant POWER*, and strict JUSTICE, which they had placed at the Head of All His *Attributes*, out of *Harmony*. This is the *wrong Light* with which, I Charitably think, some are *Misled*; And for whose Sakes, principally, I have written shis Paper. And I recommend it to these duely to Consider what I have said, with Impartiality. And also to Consider, that the Word PRESCIENCE is likewise a Word *Ad Captum*; For GOD certainly *Seeth* All Things, Which, as to us, are *Past*, *Present*, and *To Come*, *Uno Intuitu*, *In one View*, which we, being *Finite*, Cannot Conceive but with Relation to *Time*, as *Past*, *Present*, and *Future*: And Further, What the *Schools* call *Scientia Media*, or *Middle Science*, of which we have at least four Instances in *Holy Writ*, shews, That GOD may *Foresee* both what *May*, *Shall*, and what *Is not* to Come to Pass. Witness *David* in *Keilah*, and *St. Paul* when going to be *Shipwrecked*.

BUT There are others who maintain this *Predestinarian Doctrine*, because it is their *Worldly Interest* so to do ; for it helps to make the *Pot Boil* ; Such as these I heartily and sincerely *Wish*, but can scarcely hope, to *Recover* ; for they *Worship Mammon*, there GOD is their *Belly*, their *Glory* is their *Shame*, and they *mind Earthly Things*. Phil. iii. 18, 19.

I PRAY the *Predestinarians* duely to consider, that GOD's *Will* is *Immutably Free* ? His *Omnipotency* is able to Produce *Plurality* as well as *Unity*, *Mutability* as well as *Immutability*, in His *Creatures*. And by the same *Immutable* and *Indevisable Will*, He has *Ordained*, That *Some Events* shall be *Contingent*. This, if duely minded and weighed, may be of *Service* to them, if they are sincere, as I am fully persuaded some are.

I ALSO pray them to consider seriously, That their *Doctrine of Predestination* makes a *Ministry* entirely *Useless*, and their *Offers of Salvation*, *Repentance* and *Sacraments*, not only *Useless*, but indeed a *Banter* and a *Cheat* ; It *Subverts* all *Religion* and *Piety* ; It makes A *Church* nothing but an *Imposition*, and *Destroys* the *Notion* or *Idea* of A *Christian Society* ; And yet without *Religion*, A *Civil Society* cannot long *Subsist*. Now these are only *Heads*, which may be profitably *Extended*, each of them, but which, my designed *Brevity*, will not allow me to enter on the *Detail* of them.

I SHALL therefore next endeavour, by GOD's Help, to shew the plain *Meaning* of a few *Texts*, which the *Predestinarians* take to be fully on their *Side* of the *Question*.

THEY

THEY think they sufficiently Prove this their Doctrine from *Exodus ix. 16.* where GOD said to *Pharaoh*, by *Moses*, *And in very Deed for this Cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee My Power, and that My Name may be declared throughout all the Earth.* And they alledge, that this Text is determined by *St. Paul*, to be a full Proof of this their Doctrine in *Rom. ix. 17, &c.*

LET us then consider this Text, and try whether they can justly claim it as on their Side.

WHAT our Translators have rendered, *I have raised thee up*, is, I think, much better rendered in the Margin, by, *I have made thee Stand*, which in the Hebrew is *הֶעֱמַדְתִּיךָ* *Hegnemadtika*, And the LXXII. render it thus, *Καὶ ἐνεκέν τῆς διδου-
εῖθης*, *For this was thou PRESERVED*, which is the same, in Effect, with the Hebrew, for, *Have made thee Stand*, and *Have Preserved thee*, are Synonymous in this Place: And that thus it should be rendered, will appear the more plainly, if this Verse be duely compared with *v. ii.* where it is said, *And the Magicians could not Stand before Moses*, where the Word *STAND*, in the Hebrew is *עָמַד* *Lagnamodh*, and here the LXXII. render it thus, *Καὶ οὐκ ἔδυνατο οἱ Φαρισαῖοι
στῆναι* (See also *Rom. xiv. 4.* *στῆσαι*) *ἐναντίον Μωϋσῆ.* This *στῆναι* comes from *στάω*, *Sto*, to *Stand*, as *διαινεῖσθαι* comes from *διαίνομαι*, *Conferuo*, to *Preserve*. *Junius* renders this of *Exodus ix.* *Feci ut restares*, *For this very Purpose Preserved thee alive.*

NEXT Let us Consider what is the Meaning of *STANDING*, or, being *PRESERVED* alive in these two Places of this Chapter, which I take

take to be this. The *Magicians*, by their *Incantments*, made a faint Imitation of the first three *Miracles* which *Moses* wrought at that Time in *Egypt*, before *Pharaoh*, but still with great Disadvantage; for *Aaron's Rod*, when turned to a *Serpent*, Swallowed up their *Rods*. And the whole *Waters* of *Egypt* were Affected by the Second *Miracle*, whereas the *Magicians* could only Turn, or seem to Turn, a Little *Water* into *Blood*, and perhaps then only in Appearance. The whole *Fish* of the *River* Died by this *Miracle*; and the *Blood* into which *Water* was turned, was so universal, all over *Egypt*, by it, that all the *Egyptians* were forced to dig round about the *River*, that they might get *Water* to *Drink*, without excepting the *Magicians*, who could not help themselves in this Distress, otherwise than All the other People of *Egypt* did. So also when the *Frogs* came up, Although the *Magicians* brought up some few of them, yet they could not Relieve *Pharaoh*, in whose very Bed they were, and far less could they Relieve all *Egypt* from them, which *Moses* did. But the *Magicians* could not so much as Imitate any of the other Seven *Miracles*. The *Lice* defeated their *Black-magical* Attempts, and forced them to Confess, That this *Plague* was brought upon them, by the Finger of GOD. However, as GOD thought fit to permit the *Magicians* to Imitate the first *Three Miracles*, though very faintly, and with great Disadvantage, as I have shewed; so He was also pleased to allow the *Magicians* to STAND before *Moses*, until after the *Sixth Miracle* was wrought and over. But the *Seventh Miracle*, which was that of the *Plague* of *Boiles* and *Blains*, Affected even the *Magicians* themselves, insomuch that they could not STAND before

before Moses. And then GOD threatened Pharaoh with the *Tenth Plague*, which was to Affect him in the Person of his *Eldest Son* and *Heir*. This plainly shews, that GOD thought fit to Allow Pharaoh to STAND, or, did PRESERVE him, from All the *Nine Plagues*, that is, his *Person*, his *Body*, was not Affected by any of them, even although the *Seventh* Affected the *Persons*, or *Bodies*, of the *Magicians*.

THEREFORE by what is said in Verse 16. *And in very Deed, for this have I made thee to STAND, or, have PRESERVED THEE*, from these *Plagues*, is meant; That for this, GOD thought fit to let none of these *Plagues* which Affected the *Persons*, or *Bodies* of all the *Egyptians*, and even of the *Magicians* themselves, Affect and Afflict the *Person*, or *Body*, of Pharaoh, that He might shew in him, His great *Power* and *Mercy*, which He did by PRESERVING his *Person*, by a *Peculiar Exemption*, from being Affected, or Afflicted, with the *Plagues* which Affected and Afflicted the *Persons* of all the *People* of *Egypt* without Exception. But since Pharaoh would not Humble himself under the All-Mighty Hand of GOD, nor Acknowledge this his *STANDING*, *PRESERVATION*, and *peculiar Exemption* from these *Plagues*, to be Owing entirely and Expressly to the Great *Power*, and Infinite *Mercy* of GOD; Therefore the *Tenth Plague Reached Pharaoh*, and Affected him also, in the *Person* of his *Eldest Son* and *Heir*. And since this did not Produce true Repentance in him, and a suitable Acknowledgment of the Great *Power*, and Infinite *Mercy* of GOD; therefore he was Drowned in the *Red-Sea*, in his Wicked and *Rebellious Pursuit* after GOD's People.

AND

AND Therefore also the *Mercy* of which St. Paul speaks, *Rom. ix. 16.* To prove which, he gives *Pharaoh* for an Instance, must Refer to this *Exemption of Pharaoh's Person*, from these *Plagues*, with which the *Persons* of All his *Subjects*, without Exception, were Affected. For GOD was under no Obligation, by Covenant, or otherwise, thus to have Vouchsafed *Pharaoh* this Peculiar *Indulgence* and *Exemption*, unless He had, in *Mercy* thought fit so to do. Therefore it was Owing entirely to GOD's *Mercy* and *Power*.

AND this helps to Explain the subsequent *Verses* of this *Chapter*, by the Infinite *MERCY* of GOD, and not by the *SEVERITY*, for which the *Predestinarians* do so strenuously plead, under the *Title*, or *Name* of *JUSTICE*, out of *Harmony* with the *Attribute* of *MERCY*. For in *Strict Justice*, GOD might have Allowed the *Plague* of *Boils* and *Blains* to have Affected *Pharaoh's Person*, as well at the *Persons* of the *Magicians*, and of his other *Subjects*; but, in *Mercy* He shewed His Great *Power*, by this Peculiar *Exemption*. For as GOD is pleased to Call Himself the *Potter*, He has *Power* over the *Clay*; And in Fact, here He was pleased to shew *Mercy*, where, and when, in *Strict Justice*, He might have *Punished*.

AND this leads us to the right Understanding of Verse 22. That He *Endured with much Long-suffering*, this *Vessel of Wrath* fitted for *Destruction*, by his *Impenitency* and *Neglect* of the *Mercy* Vouchsafed him, by the Great *Power* of GOD. And I think This Sense of the Words is Confirmed by v. 23. *And that he might make known the Riches of his Glory on the Vessels of Mercy, which he had afore prepared unto Glory.*

This

This makes the *Antithesis* obvious; that is, since GOD was pleased to vouchsafe such undeserved *Mercy* unto stubborn, *Pharaoh*, who by his own *Default* became a *Vessel* of *Wrath*, his Miraculous *Preservation*, from All the *Nine Plagues* which *Affected* all his *Subjects*, notwithstanding, there can be no manner of Doubt of GOD's Extending His *Mercy* upon the *Faithful*, of both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, through the Merits of JESUS CHRIST, the SON of his *Love*.

THIS Interpretation is also *Confirmed* by *Exod.* viii. 15. and ix. 34. where it is said, That *Pharaoh hardened his Heart*.

AND thus, I think, the *Predestinarians* of All *Communities*, whether *Popish* or *Protestant*, are so far from being helped out in the Proof of this their beloved *Doctrine*, by this *Text* in *Exodus*, or by *St. Paul*, that on the contrary. This *Text*. is Attested by *St. Paul*, and indeed by the HOLY-GHOST, to be a full *Proof* of the most comfortable *Doctrine* of GOD's LOVE and MERCY, extended not only to All the *Faithful*, but even to such *Reprobates*, such *Vessels* of *Wrath* as was *Pharaoh*, so as to leave them entirely without *Excuse*, and plainly shews That they owe their *Damnation* to *Themselves*, for not *Accepting* of the offered *Mercy*, for *Resisting* the LOVE and MERCY, and for their final *Impenitence*, by a Wrong Application of their *Will*; for their *not doing* what GOD not only *Required*, but also *Enabled* them to *Do*: And not from an *Irresistable*, *Arbitrary*, *Condemnatory*, and *Damnatory Decree*, *Enacted* from All *Eternity*, which is against, and opposite to the *Nature* of GOD, His *Justice*, *Love* and *Mercy* which is over all His *Works*.

AND however this Conclusion may be warded off by *Sophistry*, by *Evasions*, *Distinctions*, *Wresting* of *Scripture*, by the Polluted *Reasoning* of Men who have not the SPIRIT, yet all their *Gilding* cannot and should not be swallowed down by any

who have any tolerable *Idea* of **GOD** and his *Attributes*, which are in perfect *Divine Harmony*,

WE ought to Conceive All the Divine knowable and Revealed *Perfections* of **GOD** as *Equally Essential* in themselves, as All in *Harmony*; and therefore we ought not to form *Abstract Ideas* of any of these His Infinite *Perfections*, nor of His *Attributes* as separated from one another. For Instance, we ought not to form an *Idea* of **GOD's Wisdom**, as separated from His *Goodness*; nor from His *Power*; nor His *Justice* from His *Mercy*; nor of His *Mercy* from his *Justice*, &c. for **GOD** is **JUST** in His **MERCY**, and **MERCIFULL** in His **JUSTICE**. Whosoever then duely considers **GOD's Essential Perfections** and *Attributes* as *Essentially United*, and in *Divine Harmony*, will not be apt to stumble into the sour *Predestinarian Doctrine*, nor make **GOD** the *Author* of *Sin*, nor of the *Sempeternal Misery* of Innumerable *Souls*, without their *Own Default*; and will acknowledge **GOD's Goodness**, *Love* and *Mercy* in Enabling us to attain unto *Union* and *Communion* with Himself, in, and, by the prescribed *Rules* and *Paths* of *Virtues* and *Piety*: And His *Power* in *Governing* us, as *Free-Agents*: Which *Freedom of Will* He has bestowed upon us, as a *Ray* or *Spark* of His *Divinity*, or *Divine Light*, are as we His *Image*, for without this, *Man* cannot be called His *Image* in any *Propriety*.

NOR is it reasonable to believe, that our Blessed **LOKD** and Kind *Redeemer* would have enjoined frequent *Prayer* to **GOD**, as He did in *St. Luke* xviii. 1. nor that He would have taught His *Disciples* that *Divine Prayer*, which is both the best of all *Prayers*, and the Highest, most Elevated and Comprehensive *Patern of Prayer*, if *Praying* could be of no *Use* nor *Significancy* to us; which must be the fatal Case if any of the *Posterity* of *Adam*, have had an *Irresistable*, *Damnatory Decree* passed against them from all *Eternity*, for upon this Supposition, there is no reasonable *Ground* for *Prayer* can be Assigned;

signed; because it Represents the Great GOD of LOVE and MERCY, as *Cruel, Tyranical and Barbarous*, in Commanding us to *Pray always*, when *no Prayers* can possibly be of any *Significancy or Advantage* to us.

AND we ought to be exceeding Carefull not to harbour any such unworthy Thought of GOD, as if he were a *Respecter of Persons*, for by St. Peter He has fully Declared that He is not, (and in several other of the sacred Books) Now the *Predestinarian Doctrine* is Diametrically opposite to this *Declaration*, for if GOD has *Pity* upon, and *singled* out of the whole *Mass*, of the whole *Lump* or *Race* of *Mankind*, only a few *particular Persons*, whom He has *Resolved* and *Decreed*, from all *Eternity*, to be His *Favourites*, and to whom *Exclusive* of all others, the whole *Promises* of the *Gospel* are to be strictly *Confined*; however *Qualified* they may be; And at the same time, *neglecting, slighting, overlooking, nay previously Determining* All the *Rest* of *Mankind*, to *sempeternal Damnation*; What is this, but to Assert that GOD is a very *Partial, Arbitrary Respector of Persons*, which is high *Blasphemy*, and a flat *Contradiction* to GOD's *Declaration* by St. Peter, and upon a very solemn Occasion.

I SHALL Conclude in the Words of a late very Learned and Judicious Author, in his *Reflections upon Reason*, Edit 3d. amongst many other strong and excellent Things, he saith, p. 37, 38.
 “ The Freedom of Man's Will is One of those
 “ self-evident Truths, that it is not in any Man's
 “ Power to Doubt whether he has it or no.—It is
 “ the Voice of Nature; It is an Indelible Impres-
 “ sion upon our Hearts, It is as clear as the Light
 “ at Noon-day; It is a Truth upon which the In-
 “ stitution and Discipline of our whole Life, from
 “ the Cottage to the Throne, from the Cradle to
 “ the Grave is entirely founded. Take away the
 “ the *Freedom of Man's Will*, you at once destroy
 “ the very Notions of Virtue and Vice, Rewards
 “ and

“ and Punishments, Laws and Law-givers, Human and Divine.

I SHALL here subjoin a Citation from the Revd. and Learned Dr. *Brown*, (afterwards a Bishop in *Ireland*) in his Answer to the Infamous Infidel *Toland's Christianity not Mysterious*, page 150, 151.

THE *Magicians* turning their *Rods* into *Serpents*, was not a real *Conversion*, but *Mimickry* by *Incantment*, as it is in the Original, by *Wiles* and *Jugdgling*: For we find when they endeavoured to imitate *Moses* in the Instantaneous Production of any Thing with Life, then the *Devil* failed them, and they were forced to own, it was the Finger of GOD.

THUS Sir, I think, I have Fully and Undeniably proved *Man* to be now again A *Free-Agent*, And I have Charged the Doctrine of *Predestination* home upon the *Consciences* of the *Maintainers* of it, from Undeniable *Principles*, plainly held forth to us in *Holy Writ* Unperverted. And I humbly Pray the Infinitely Just GOD of Love and Mercy, to Open their *Eyes*, to Pardon their *Sins*, to illuminate their *Souls*, and to Guide them, by His HOLY SPIRIT, into All Truth; For the Sake of the Beloved SON of His LOVE, JESUS CHRIST, our Blessed LORD, Saviour, and Redeemer. AMEN.

WHY Is This *Wrangling World* thus *Toss'd* and *Torn*; FREE-GRACE, FREE-WILL, are both together Born.

IF GOD's *Free-Grace* Rule In, and over Me; HIS WILL is Mine, and So my Will is Free.

I Am, Sir,

Your most Humble Servant,

November 24,

1741.

A (B) C.

E I N I S.